



NEWS

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas **L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2nd District**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RIDLEY-THOMAS TO PARTICIPATE AT CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTING 'NEW MEDIA' USE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

Urban New Media Panel – "Beyond Broadcast 2009: Embracing the Digital Renaissance"



LOS ANGELES COUNTY – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas will participate Thursday in a panel discussion at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication on new media. The panel will explore how communication avenues for African American and minorities can be strengthened and enhanced in the Digital Age.

WHAT: Urban New Media Panel: "Beyond Broadcast 2009: Embracing the Digital Renaissance"

WHEN: Thursday, June 4, 2009 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

LOCATION: USC Annenberg School for Communication, 3503 Watt Way, Los Angeles, CA 90089

Supervisor Ridley-Thomas has credited the use of new media technology with contributing to his election last year. He is the first African-American male to serve on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. As a Supervisor, Ridley-Thomas has continued his commitment to the use of new media by establishing a multi-media communication team to provide relevant information to the 2.5 million residents of the Second District on several platforms to empower them to engage in civic activity.

Panel participants include: Supervisor Ridley-Thomas; KJLH 102.3 FM Radio General Manager Karen Slade; Pastor Mark Whitlock, Christ Redeemer Church in Irvine, CA; Journalist Jasmyne Cannick; and Actress/Talk Show Host Rolonda Watts. 3BAAS President and CEO Kevin Ross will serve as moderator.

The discussion is part of the three-day 4th Annual Beyond Broadcast conference. It is the first time the conference -- which explores the evolution of participatory digital public media -- has been held outside the northeast.

This year's conference theme: "Public Service Media from Local to Global," brings this ongoing conversation to the world stage, examining these issues from a global perspective.

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According to the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism the makeup of African American media in 2009 is shifting. Newspaper circulation continued to fall in 2008. As the print sector shrank, both the newspaper and magazine industries expanded online. One major black daily converted to weekly, others have folded, and various black-owned radio outlets are struggling with plunging advertising revenue. While the reach of black-oriented cable television networks grew, there is no black-owned cable television network in the United States. One advantage black-owned media is the greater trust it enjoys among many African Americans. So while African Americans are twice as likely to trust black-owned or black-focused media as they are to trust the mainstream media, established media outlets are facing possible extinction. This is taking place as the Internet continues to expand and engage hundreds of millions through blogs, Internet radio, digital content and social networks.

With the theme, "Embracing the Digital Renaissance" the panel will explore how the Internet is being used among different constituencies. We will also discuss the implications of digital and other technologies for the future of reaching communities of color, employment opportunities and the latest in mobile applications. An important aspect of the panel will be to build lasting virtual and real world bridges across the spectrum of organizations and ideas in the public information space.

The afternoon forum provides an opportunity for media, academia, politicians, business and the technology sector to convene to chart the course African Americans have already embarked on as the Internet re-imagines how society receives news, information and entertainment. The goal is to identify opportunities where these conversations will produce the highest value in the United States and abroad.

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